2003
Information Technology Assessment
And
Strategic Plan for Technological Development

SUMMARY VERSION

Presented to
Fillmore County Board of Supervisors
City of Geneva
Village of Exeter
Village of Fairmont
Village of Grafton
Village of Milligan
Village of Ohiowa
Village of Shickley
Village of Strang
Citizens of Fillmore County

Prepared by the
Fillmore County Development Corporation
Information Technology Committee

March 15, 2003

Scott Stockwell, Facilitator
1032 G Street, Geneva, NE 68361
402-759-4910 fillcodevco@alltel.net

Committee Members:
Gary Dick, Geneva; Mike Taylor, Geneva; Phyllis Schoenholz, Ohiowa; Cam Wilkins, Geneva;
Jamey Pankoke, Fairmont; Paul Bohn, Geneva; Elmer Hessheimer, Geneva; Gerald Slezak,
Milligan

Table of Contents
SUMMARY VERSION

Special Thanks

This report is brought to you by the Information Technology Committee of the Fillmore County Development Corporation in conjunction with the Nebraska Information Technology Commission Community Council, and with financial assistance from the University of Nebraska's Technology Across Nebraska (TAN).

Introduction

This is the final report on Information Technology Assessment and the Strategic Plan for Technological Development for Fillmore County, Nebraska. This report represents the surveying, analysis and strategic planning done by the Information Technology Committee for the Fillmore County Development Corporation with the assistance of Anne Byers from the Nebraska Information Technology Commission Community Council, and with financial assistance from the University of Nebraska's Technology Across Nebraska (TAN).

This report represents a year and a half of work by the Information Technology Committee. It began with the recognition that in order to compete in today's business recruitment market Fillmore County must have an established IT infrastructure to insure the opportunity for today's businesses to compete on both a local and a world market.

Business practices are changing every day. The small business in Fillmore County no longer has to compete for customers in just the county or State. The business market has grown to global capabilities. We must be prepared to offer all current and future businesses in Fillmore County the ability to compete on a global scale or businesses will set up shop somewhere else, customers will shop somewhere else and employees will live somewhere else.

Establishing an Information Technology Committee

Our primary committee expectation was to have a well-rounded group of members who not only represented each community, but also represented each aspect of the county economy. Invitations were sent to more than 130 individuals asking them to consider working on the committee. Affirmative responses were received form 20 people representing city government, county government, schools, hospital, banks, utilities, retail business, industry, and agriculture. Those expressing interest included the following:

> Carri Vavra, Milligan; Ron Isley, Grafton; Gary Dick, Geneva; Mike Taylor, Geneva; Alan Michl, Exeter; Terry Hejny, Geneva; Pat Hilty, Geneva; Jeff Lulf, Geneva; James Atmore, Fairmont; Phyllis Schoenholz, Ohiowa; Jerry Stratman, Geneva; Larry Cerney, Geneva; Cam Wilkins, Geneva; Judy Weber, Geneva; Jamey Pankoke, Fairmont; Patrick Fairbanks, Geneva; Bob Bettger, Fairmont; Paul Bohn, Geneva; Larry Eichelberger, Geneva; Elmer Hessheimer, Geneva.

The first meeting was on July 11, 2002 and 15 of the 20 people who had responded attended. Anne Byers of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission also attended and has been a regular attendee to our meetings. Our first meeting explained the intentions of the committee and asked for people to commit to meeting monthly until the project was completed.

After 18 months we have completed our task. The following is the completed report beginning with an Executive Summary, then a detail of the information gathered and the conclusion attained.

Executive Summary

The Information Technology Committee has determined that as a community Fillmore County is considered a Traditional Economic Community (traditional means of conducting business and has not yet adapted to using the technologies available to change the way they do business), but has begun the transition to an Emerging Information Age Community (incorporating information technology into the operations of some sectors of the community, but have not yet fully realized the benefits of information technology).

Comparing Fillmore County with competing economic communities the IT Committee believes it is necessary to assist businesses and the citizen of Fillmore County with this transition in order to successfully compete economically both locally and globally. The ultimate goal would be to help Fillmore County transition itself fully to be an Information Age Community using technology innovatively in their businesses, schools, libraries, health care facilities, government operations, community service organizations, and non-profit organizations.

Technology Vision Statement

The IT Committee has established a vision of what they believe is necessary for Fillmore County to competed economically. Our vision for Fillmore County is:

> **To be a leader, combining new and cutting edge technology with existing public and private resources to improve and advance, educational, economic and community opportunities for the continued growth, well being, success and enjoyment of our citizens.**

The IT Committee has identified a number of specific priorities to reach this vision. The following is a list the highest priorities as determined by the committee. This does not diminish the need to complete all of the priorities identified, but sets up a pathway of development that hopefully will spur the transition process and initiate a competitive economic position for Fillmore County.

Highest Priorities

These are the priorities that have been developed after reviewing a number of very specific technological needs as identified by the committee. These priorities represent the most important first steps necessary for Fillmore County to transition from a Traditional Economic Community to an Information Age Community.

- Establish a technology task force for Fillmore County;
- Encourage and assist business use of the Internet for business development and E-commerce;
- Increase educational opportunities for the public and increase public access of the Internet;
- Move local government towards a complete E-government service capability;

- Inventory telecommunication assets and encourage the continued development of Broad Band (BB) services (i.e. DSL, Wireless, Cable, Satellite) till everyone in the county has BB access;
- And, healthcare facilities should have an interactive website and provide more telemedicine Services.

A strategic plan has been developed to complete these highest priorities. You may review this strategic plan at the end of this report. At the heart of the strategic plan is the development of an on-going technology task force established for the sole purpose of implementing the strategic plan and development of future plans to complete the remaining priorities identified by the original IT Committee.

Strategic Plan for Technological Development

Vision Statement

Every plan must begin with a vision. The IT Committee established a vision of what they believe is necessary for Fillmore County to competed economically. Our vision for Fillmore County is:

> **To be a leader, combining new and cutting edge technology with existing public and private resources to improve and advance, educational, economic and community opportunities for the continued growth, well being, success and enjoyment of our citizens.**

The IT Committee has identified a number of specific priorities to reach this vision. The following is an outline of all the specific priorities as determined by the committee for each of the areas studied.

Outline of Priorities

Priorities determined by the committee for community leadership and support development are as follows:

- Establish a county technology task force that will work at:
    - Increase the awareness of the importance of IT development among leaders.
    - Encouraging IT use and development in the county
    - Developing public/private partnerships to accelerate IT development
    - Develop cooperative arrangements to share costs.
    - Seek alternative funding
    - Create widespread IT development within the county.

Priorities determined by the committee for telecommunication infrastructure are as follows:

- Inventory IT assets – where and who
    - Determine aggregate demand for business and home broadband services
    - Project needs for broadband services
- Work with Alltel to expand DSL services to all communities
- Encourage wireless providers to continue development of wireless services
- Encourage the development of fiber optic capabilities
- Work with providers to determine a long term plan for expansion of broadband services
- Site visits to leading edge communities

Priorities determined by the committee for technology literacy and public access are as follows:

- Determine need for public access to internet
- Increase Public access to free internet use
- Increase Educational Opportunities
- Increase use of Geneva library for video conferencing
- Determine how the Universal Service Fund may be accessed

Priorities determined by the committee for advanced technology training are as follows:

- Make sure IT training is well advertised to every household and in newspapers
- Promote available college courses offered by nearby colleges
- Provide training in libraries where free access is available
- Develop a computer recycling program

Priorities determined by the committee for economic development and e-commerce are as follows:

- Must improve IT infrastructure to be able to target IT businesses
- Increase business use of computer in everyday business activities
- Increase business use of internet for business development opportunities
- Encourage and assist business in using the internet for e-commerce
- Encourage and assist business in using alternative small business services such as ATM/Credit card purchase options
- Improve local and state government websites to provide information and business activities to business and general public
- Improve awareness of capable local computer services.

Priorities determined by the committee for public libraries are as follows:

- Research computers without time limits should be more accessible to adults. Game computers for kids should be separated from research computers.
- Library catalog should be on-line with links to other libraries.
- Digital books should be made available on-line.

Priorities determined by the committee for education are as follows:

- Increase teacher education on computer usage for the classroom.
- Increase teacher use of computer to provide lesson planning, interactive lessons, lesson notes and homework via Internet.
- Each School District should have interactive, up-to-date website.

Priorities determined by the committee for healthcare are as follows:

- Healthcare facilities should have interactive website.
- Increase telemedicine services in the county

- Patient records stored digitally
- Medical facilities networked with medical service providers
- Staff training available interactive via internet
- Provide an "Ask a Nurse" program

Priorities determined by the committee for Local Government and Community Services are as follows:

- Local Governments to provide Agendas, Minutes, Budget documents, and Ordinance online.
- Local Governments to provide Permit applications on line
- Local Governments to provide property tax appraisals, Land use, and zoning maps and information online.
- Local Governments to provide a greater variety of new residential information online.
- Local Governments to provide a budget for technological upgrades and employee training.
- Local Governments to provide bid postings online.
- Local Governments to coordinate technological development with local providers.
- Local Governments to provide online service capability for County/City Treasurers, Clerks, Planning &Zoning, Public Safety agencies, Road Departments, Sewer & water departments, and emergency response.

Priorities determined by the committee for Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement, And Emergency Services are as follows:

- Communication between community Police Departments and Sheriffs office needs to improve.
- County website should be developed with a full spectrum of county government services on-line including criminal justice, law enforcement and emergency service information.
- Community websites should be developed with a full spectrum of community government services on-line including criminal justice, law enforcement and emergency service information.
- Inter-agency non-profit services providers should have an informational and interactive website for each provider.
- Listing of Inter-agency service provides should be available online.

Priorities determined by the committee for arts, culture and history are as follows:

- Develop informational and interactive websites for Non-profit arts, culture and history service providers.
- Community calendar of events & activities posted online
- Develop a computer recycling program for non-profit service providers.

Highest Priorities

Using the outline of specific priorities the following list of the highest priorities has been determined by the committee. This does not diminish the need to complete all of the specific priorities identified, but it does set up a pathway of development that hopefully will spur the transition process and initiate a competitive economic position for Fillmore County.

These priorities represent the most important first steps necessary for Fillmore County to transition from a Traditional Economic Community to an Information Age Community.

- Establish a technology task force for Fillmore County;
- Encourage and assist business use of the Internet for business development and E-commerce;
- Increase educational opportunities and increase public access of the Internet;
- Move local government towards a complete E-government service capability;
- Inventory telecommunication assets and encourage the continued development of Broad Band (BB) services (i.e. DSL, Wireless, Cable, Satellite) till everyone in the county has BB access;
- And, healthcare facilities should have an interactive website and provide more telemedicine Services.

Strategic Goals, Objectives, Timeline

Each of these highest priorities has become the goals for which objectives and a timeline must be set for completion. The following are the objectives and timelines established to accomplish these goals.

Goal #1 Establish a technology task force for Fillmore County:

Objective Request to County Supervisors to establish a Technology Task Force made up of members appointed by the Supervisors and operated through the FCDC Board of Directors and FCDC Staff.

Timeline Establish task force by May 1, 2004;

Goal #2 Encourage and assist business use of the Internet for business development and E-commerce:

Objective Develop informational workshops for business owners and entrepreneurs to show benefits of Internet for business development and E-commerce, and Run at least 2 workshops per year;

Timeline Set up 1st workshop in late winter – early spring and the second workshop in late summer early fall 2004;

Objective	Use available educational resources to develop training workshops to train business owners and entrepreneurs on setting up websites and establishing E-business opportunities.	
Timeline	Set training dates by June 2004	

Goal #3   Increase educational opportunities for the public and increase public access of the Internet:

Objective	Use available educational resources to develop plans for regular computer and Internet use training.
Timeline	Begin development of the plans by December 2004
Objective	Research all grant opportunities to help find funding for the training and public use facility.
Timeline	Begin research by December 2004
Objective	Develop plans for a public use site to allow up to 20 computers to be made available for public use.
Timeline	

Goal #4   Move local government towards a complete E-government service capability:

Objective	Have Nebraska On-line staff speak to county Supervisors about the benefits of allowing them to provide county website services.
Timeline	Have them attend a January meeting of the Supervisors;
Objective	Persuade county Supervisors to allow Nebraska On-line to build the county website and develop the e-government systems they have started for a number of other Nebraska counties
Timeline	Have the county decide that by end of the March 31, 2004
Objective	Begin website development.
Timeline	Start development of county website by July 2004.

Goal #5   Inventory telecommunication assets and encourage the continued development of Broad Band (BB) services (i.e. DSL, Wireless, Cable, Satellite) till everyone in the county has BB access:

Objective	Do a complete inventory of all available Internet service equipment and systems within the county.
Timeline	Complete by Spring 2005

Objective   Map the equipment and systems locations and determine the service areas for that equipment or system

Timeline   Complete by Spring 2005

Goal #6   Healthcare facilities should develop interactive website and provide more telemedicine services:

Objective   Communicate to all Healthcare facilities the need to develop an on-line interactive services website. Work together to establish an interactive website that allows citizens to get answers to their questions about healthcare services available in the county.

Timeline   Get consensus from the Healthcare community by Summer 2005

Objective   Have the first prototype website available for inspection by the Healthcare community.

Timeline   Prototype available for inspection by Summer 2006.

Objective   Complete the website modifications of the prototype for fully operational interactive website.

Timeline   Complete by December 2006